

FEBRUARY • 1988

Saint Paul ATARI Computer Enthusiasts

SPACE

An independent computer user group

SPACE Meeting Friday, Feb. 12th at 7:30pm

MAST Meeting Friday, Feb. 19th at 7:30pm

At the Falcon Heights Community Center
2077 Larpenteur Avenue West

MAST+ Programmers Meeting

Monday, Feb. 22nd at 7:30pm

At First Minnesota Bank Building - second floor
Lexington and Larpenteur, in back of building



Minnesota
Atari ST

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SPACE/MAST East (XE) - BBS Phone: (612)-774-0135

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! BYTES from the
SPACE PRES

by Larry Vanden Plas

The first column of 8-bit Q & A appears in the newsletter this month. The theme is basic, but helpful. Let us know what you think and send us your questions.

We have tentatively planned the themes for the coming meetings: February - Speech synthesizers,
March - Low priced software sampler
April - BBS

May - Advanced Applications/Languages

June - A games sampler

July - SPACE Anniversary

The sales of 5 1/4" DS/DD disks for 30 cents each at the January meeting was so successful (We ran out), we will order more. Remember, first come, first served.

Projects under development: a survey of the best places to buy hardware and software, Atari computer set-ups at home and away, magazine reviews, and special software packages.

Learn the latest on coming Atari products and the future of ANALOG at the meeting.

After Last Night
(from the VP)

by John Novotny

The January SPACE meeting had lots going on with demos of both RAM disks and the new GAME MACHINE computer from ATARI. Look for the secretary's report for the details. This has another purpose, mainly to tie up loose ends and help get some more stuff on track.

First, a demo for the February SPACE meeting. A text file on the December DOM about building a speech synthesizer perked my curiosity on this topic. As I mentioned at the meeting, one of our members, Tony Walsh, has agreed to

demonstrate the Software Automated Mouth (S.A.M.), a software package which was available in the early '80s. Before the end of the meeting, another of our members, Bob Arko, volunteered to demonstrate the speech synthesizer he built (its the one described in the DOM article), and using software from Analog (issue 29). Come and hear the 8-bit tell you more. Also, if anyone has other products or knows of such, let me know and if the interest is there, we can follow this up later.

One loose end. As I also mentioned at the meeting, its hard for me to stay current (and much less catch up) on what's happening that's significant with ATARI 8-bit. That is why I proposed we have members that would tell us the highlights from the various publications that still carry the 8-bit. This should include ANTIC and ANALOG magazines and disks, COMPUTE! and EXPLORER magazines, the ZMAG newsletter, and possibly more. I should still be getting COMPUTE! magazine, so I will be doing this one. Joe Danko said he will do ZMAG. We need other members to volunteer for the rest. Please let me know if you can help.

Another loose end. This one is just informational. I had some stuff for the RAM disk demo, but time just ran out. It involved using MAC65 disk version under DOS 2.5, and the COMPUTE! programs Speedscript and Speedcalc. First I have a mod for the Speedscript customizer to change more of the default disk drive numbers then D4. Also, the customizer program does not work with the initial release of Speedscript 3.0. It does work with the version on the Best for ATARI disk currently available. Also, the use of the RAMDISK.COM from the December COMPUTE! allows RESET to exit Speedscript with a cold start, but not reinitialize D8. The RESET to coldstart also provides a nice way to return to BASIC (or disable BASIC). Also nice would be a routine to do this - anybody

have one? Then a word about Speedcalc - Joe Danko showed the version I modified to clear its memory buffers on initial boot. The restart does not execute this, so buffers should remain intact when returning from DOS (run at \$2000 from M option). If you want this mod for your copy of Speedcalc, see me. Another mod in this program is a change published in a COMPUTE! magazine several months after the initial program was released. This was to allow printing a block of cells whose starting cell is defined by the user, rather than cell AA1. This doesn't work - can anyone help here? One last note about MAC65 - it seems to work great under DOS 2.5. Its INIT address is \$8800 (append to file to get control following binary load), and the restart address is \$8803 (use to return from DOS with M option).

One Thing Leads to Another..

by John Novotny

If you went to the January SPACE meeting, you may have noticed that I like the RAMDISK.COM from the December issue of COMPUTE! magazine. There is also another nice routine from COMPUTE! (can't remember which issue) called XLEDIT that I've tried and liked. It implements some of the Function keys of the 1200XL on the 800XL or XE machines. It makes CTRL-5 toggle key click, CTRL-6 thru -9 do cursor positioning [top bottom left right], and arrow keys work without holding CTRL. All this toggles ON and OFF with the HELP key - and when its ON the screen is darker. Well, this all works very well as originally presented, but it uses a whopping 192 bytes of page 1. But to make matters worse, the first 14 bytes are also used by my favorite RAMDISK.COM. So a fix was in order.

First let's see how the original XLEDIT works. It is ML code that is loaded into page 6, and when given control (with USR(1664)), does as follows: moves the

keystroke translate (XLATE) table to page 1, modifies 13 locations in the page 1 copy, and links 'sense HELP key value/toggle XLATE table' into the VBLANK interrupt routine. The extra VBLANK interrupt code remains in page 6, and the modified XLATE table in page 1

Here is how my version works. The ML code is loaded in two blocks; the initialize code to page 6 +192 (enough room for the XLATE table starting at page 6) and the VBLANK interrupt code to page 1, above the 14 bytes used here by RAMDISK.COM. When given control (with USR(1728,XBA)), it does as follows: moves the XLATE table to XBA (a buffer address you provide), and the rest is the same. But now we have only VBLANK interrupt code of XLEDIT in page 1, the XLATE table where you can protect it, and page 6 can be left available for other code (assuming you never have to call the initialize code again)

We have provided the following XLEDIT files on the February DOM: .LST - the assembly source code, .OBJ - the assembler output, and .BAS - a short demo in BASIC. The .OBJ file may be loaded with the L-option of DOS 2.5. Then, when you go to BASIC, do an immediate command U=USR(1728,1536) and you will have XLEDIT to use.

SPACE Disk of the Month - 2/88

by Joe Danko and Greg Peasley

This month we have a side and a half: Side A

DOS SYS 037
DUP SYS 042
AUTORUN SYS 001
XLEDIT BAS 006
XLEDIT LST 016
XLEDIT OBJ 002
SMRTSHT DOC 036
SMRTSHT BAS 145
MATH BAS 028
TITANIC BAS 182
MENU 052

SPIRAL BAS 020
HELP TXT 021
HELP BAS 007
002 FREE SECTORS

Side B

DOS SYS 037
AUTORUN SYS 217
CARDS FNT 009
POKER CMP 062
STUDSCREEN 046
336 FREE SECTORS

1. XLEDIT.* files: Please recognize John*Novotny as an up and coming ATARI 8-bit S/W GURU. Famed for his IDOC graphics utilities, he has given us A Tricky little utility written in ATARI BASIC and ASSEMBLY code. He has also provided the assembly source code. The core of the routine allows you to customize the keyboard translation. As seen here it allows toggling the key-click, one key cursor movement and quick movement of the cursor to the corners of the screen.

2. SMRTSHT.BAS & SMRTSHT.DOC: A spreadsheet written in ATARI BASIC. It works even if it is a little slow.

3. MATH.BAS: A user-friendly math drill application in ATARI BASIC.

4. TITANIC.BAS: Thanks to Rich Mier for providing this text adventure written in ATARI BASIC. I can't get off the bridge. If anyone gets through this please give us a demo.

5. SPIRAL.BAS: A computerized SPIROGRAPH written in ATARI BASIC.

6. Side B: An autoboot STUD POKER game written in assembly language and requires all of the files on side B. You play against 3 to 5 computerized players and can choose from 6 STUD variations. Just boot it up, it seems to ignore the BASIC whether it is installed or not.

THE LIBRARY will be selling blank disks for cost plus a small profit for the club at the February SPACE meeting.

We will have all of the ANALOG S/W disks for sale as well as many specialized application disks. The TEXTPRO textprocessor application disks are not ready for release yet but we will sell what

we have to any interested brave soul.

The goal of the DOM library is to serve the membership with really fun and interesting S/W. If anyone has an unmet need for a program that they have seen or heard of we will try as hard as we can to get it for you. Leave a message for Joe Danko on the SPACE BBS or give me a call at 777-9500.

Last but not least, please submit any and all original or acquired public domain software to the librarians for possible addition to the LIBRARY and release on a Disk of the Month.

SPACE January Meeting Minutes

Recorded by Ernie Costello

1. The meeting was called to order January 8, 1988 at 7:30 PM by President Larry Vanden Plas. Larry introduced the new Officers for 1988.

2. Treasurers report: Bob Siede. For December, 1987 income was \$215 and expenses \$363, which included purchase of our BBS hard disk drive. Income for 1987 was \$2322 and expenses \$3220, leaving a year-end balance of \$307.18.

3. Vice President's report and news: John Novotny. John is exploring our library of software to select some classics and schedule demonstrations at meetings.

John highly recommends getting Compute's "Best of Atari" magazine with disk for its games and utilities. Compute also has a RAM disk utility that simulates a cold start without losing data stored in disk 8. Joe Danko will demo his similar utility this evening. John would like members to submit reviews from magazine articles to inform our members. Ernie Costello gave an example from Antic, July 1987. It was on developing a custom Atariwriter Plus print driver for Epson printers. He pointed out that since it involved changing the program's software he was reluctant to try it without some expert guidance. He thought it would be

an excellent type of meeting topic. Joe Danko pointed out that such articles are often public domain.

4. President's report: Larry Vanden Plas.

Dues will increase to \$15 a year for 1988. However anyone renewing tonight could do so at the 1987 rate.

More software and a dot matrix printer is needed as donations for our 130XE/1050 set at Children's Hospital, St. Paul.

Progress is being made on combining the SPACE/MAST and TAIG newsletters. A copy of the proposed agreement is available to anyone wanting to review it.

Larry asked for help in getting advertisers for the newsletter.

5. Offers and Deals

Joe Danko said Children's Palace in Maplewood Mall had bargain prices on games although they were primarily for the 400/800 line. Ernie Costello said his two-headed printer cable was working fine. They are available from Endless Electronics for \$20. Larry Vanden Plas assisted them in perfecting the design.

6. BBS news: Bruce Haug: Bruce asked for suggestions on what kind of programs we wanted on the BBS. He pointed out that we definitely cannot use copywrited programs. He also needs a printer to record log-ons. He may also need to cull out anyone who hasn't logged on in the past six months from our current list of 256 registered users.

7. Librarian: Jim Scheib: Jim asked for magazine, book and program donations to our library.

8. Demonstrations: Joe Danko demonstrated the use of RAM disks. Particularly impressive was the use of a spelling checker in RAM that ran fast and certainly would save diskdrive wear.

Phil Siefert demonstrated the new XE game system. Based on the 64XE, it has the added feature of a gun which would be available for separate purchase in the future. The game system should accomplish its goal of revitalizing the 8 bit line.



8 Bit Q & A

by Larry Vanden Plas

Q. Recently the directories on a couple of my disks indicated that there were 999+ sectors free despite the fact that there were a number of files on the disk. What is going on? What should I do?

A. If your directory shows that you have 999+ sectors free and you have a number of files on the disk, this means that the directory has lost track of the sectors allocated to your files. First, don't save any more files to the disk because you could record right over one of your present files. Second, try to load the files one at a time into the computer and resave them on another disk you have prepared. You may be able to rescue most of your files this way.

Q. Isn't there a better way of loading a program like SANTAGAM.COM (a compiled program from our December Disk of the Month) than loading the Disk Operating System (DOS) and then using selection "L", Binary Load?

A. Yes, a program like SANTAGAM.COM can be put on a separate disk and made to autoloading when you turn on the computer. This is a simple five step process. First, load the DOS without Basic (hold down the OPTION key if you have an XE or XL). Second, remove your original disk, put a blank disk in the drive and use the "P" (FORMAT SINGLE) DOS selection to format the disk. Third, use selection "H" WRITE DOS FILES from the DOS menu. Fourth, use the "O" DUPLICATE FILE selection from the DOS menu, type SANTAGAM.COM (or another machine language file you want to move) when asked NAME OF FILE TO MOVE? Follow the directions to insert your original (source) disk and destination (recently formatted) disk. Fifth, rename the newly moved program (file) AUTORUN.SYS by using the "E" RENAME FILE selection from the DOS menu, e.g. when the computer says RENAME - GIVE OLD NAME, NEW; type SANTAGAM.COM,

AUTORUN.SYS.

Now whenever the computer is turned on with this disk in the active drive, it will boot up DOS and DOS will look for a file named AUTORUN.SYS, load it into memory and run it. Just remember not to load BASIC with this disk.



SPACE 8-Bit BBS News

By Bruce Haug

We now have a printer to LOG "SIGN-ON's" on.. This makes the job of being SYSOP much easier. Now its right there on the printer, when you sign-on what you do U/L, D/L, and when you SIGN-OFF.

We now have somewhere around 289 users on the BBS, of course not all of them are very active. About 24 to 28 people sign on per day. The biggest thing we do have is NO DOWN TIME... The SYSTEM is working better then I expected.

It's still nice if you leave me E-MAIL when you U/L a program. I did take the Christmas AMS Music off the BBS, But there is a file of ROCK Music out there, you do have to DE-ARC it though.

See you FEBRUARY 12th.



Learning to Program in Atari BASIC

by Jackson Beebe

This is part 2 of this article. Part one was printed in the Dec. 87 issue of the newsletter (You know, the ones that say Nov 87, on them).

2. REM STATEMENTS: (Continued)

If you put a semicolon between items in a PRINT statement (normal), it doesn't skip any spaces. 10 PRINT "HI"; "THERE" This prints HITHERE. A key feature is a trailing semicolon (left at the end of a line). This suppresses a carriage return. Don't panic. This just means the printer "sits there" waiting at the end of a line like this: 10 PRINT "HI"; 20 PRINT "THERE" This prints HITHERE. See, the printer

"waited" at the end of HI. USUALLY items in a PRINT statement are separated by semicolons, like: 10 PRINT "HI "; "THERE "; "JOE"

This prints HI THERE JOE. Note I left trailing spaces after the I and E, inside the parenthesis. You can use leading spaces when you wish to begin printing less than 10 spaces in. 10 PRINT " " This is indented"

Without a trailing semicolon, every time a program sees PRINT, it skips to a new line.

You can print on a printer, following these same rules, but using the LPRINT statement (for line printer.)

10 LPRINT "Hello There" This will print on the printer, but not on the screen.

4. MULTIPLE STATEMENTS ON A LINE: More than one BASIC instruction may be placed on one line, and always is in fact, in advanced programs. To do this, you separate statements with a colon. 10 PRINT "HI":PRINT:PRINT "JOE" This prints HI, skips a line and prints JOE.

One exception! NOTHING may follow a REM. Here's an okay example: 10 X = X + 1:REM increments X

Here's a NOT OKAY example: 10 REM increment X:X = X + 1 This won't work, as NOTHING past a REM statement gets executed.

5. NEW:

The command NEW, clears out the Random Access Memory. When you're ready to write a program, you type NEW and hit the RETURN key. That wipes all your RAM memory clean. It erases any old programs and variables, you were using. It will not affect programs stored on disk or tape. When you LOAD in a program from disk (see 12. LOADING A PROGRAM:), it automatically clears RAM first, just as if it had a NEW command built-in.

Contact me at:

Jackson Beebe, Prairie Data Fields, 807 W. Hill Street, Urbana, IL 61801, or CompuServe 72550,317

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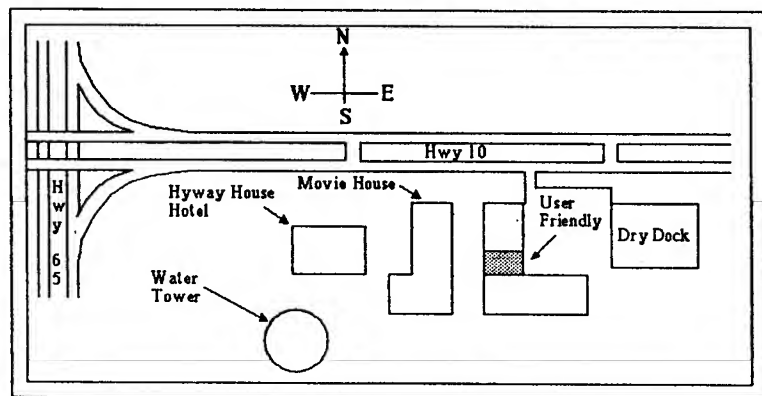
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◆ KISterminal A Review

By Ron Knights (aka Jim Harris)

Sometimes I wonder if I'll ever find a perfect terminal program with all the desired features; one that's easy to use. Flash offered promise; but many features went un-used because of their complexity. The latest version of Flash won't redial with my Atari 520ST, Avatex 1200-baud modem and pulse dialing. After a few weeks of frantic struggles, it was time to look for another term program. Then, along came KISterm (KIS for short). KISterm was written by Tom Zemlin and Roger Hamilton, and offered by Alphatech Computers, a local Minneapolis store. The program name means "Keep it Simple." With such simplicity, you might wonder if the KIS has any good features. Greg Brown was nice enough to demonstrate KIS in my home; he's an enthusiastic supporter of the program and Alphatech (authors of the program, and store where it's sold.) KIS passed the acid test: it worked on my computer/modem. Greg demonstrated the beta-test version of future updates: impressive! The original version of KIS is now in my library. Currently, updates are only available to beta-testers; I remember just a few of the new features; when the updates arrive, it will be time for a sequel to this review!

KIS has 7 main pull-down menus: Desktop, File, Options, Functions, KIS Dos, Phone and ARC Shell. There are two screens: the Menu Screen and the Input/Output screen. The menu screen offers window and pull-down menus. The input/output screen is used for calling bbses. You flip between screens by using the left or right mouse buttons. The Desk Top pull down menu offers you six options for adding special desk accessories. You are, however, limited by available memory. You must also consider the amount of

memory you might want for RAM disk or capture buffer. The file pull down menu offers the following features: capture, download, print it, upload, view file and Quit. Capture will capture text as you read it. Print it allows you to print the captured text; you can look at it first with View File. You can even pause the text as you read it. Upload allows you to send files to a bbs, and Download allows you to receive them. One guess what Quit does!

The Option pull-down menu allows you to set the screen color, baud rate, duplex, line feed, protocol, time & date, emulation and RS232 Setup. I found it easy to make these changes. You can do just fine with the defaults. But you might want to tinker around with the color settings, etc.

The Functions pull-down menu allows you to define your macro keys (Function Keys); you have 20 function keys to accommodate most any needs. You get the extra keys by hitting the ALT key. Modem config and terminal config allow you to setup for any host computer you would call.

KIS dos allows you to read the disk directory, check for free disk space, delete and rename files, format a disk, change the default path and drive. Changing the default and drive would allow you to be creative with a hard drive or second floppy drive. I only have one drive, so the default is fine with me.

Before you call a Bulletin board, you'll want to set up your dialing directories. The phone pull-down menu allows you to store 10 phone numbers per directory. You can save, edit or load numbers, and include passwords, macros, user number, etc. Of course, if you use long-distance, KIS allows you to insert the proper pauses, codes, etc. If you want to test your program without saving a file, you can manual dial.

ARC shell allows you to access the most-used file compression utility. Basically, ARC is a utility that compresses or combines files so they take up less space

on disk drives. Your BBS or user groups can store more files, and save money. KIS allows you to access ARC without leaving the program. You save time by not hunting for that utility disk.

Analysis/Criticism

KISterm is a good program, and one that I will use in the future. KIS might not totally replace Flash. KIS still has many rough edges. The most glaring omission is the lack of a printed manual. A manual should always be included with the purchase price. We get, instead, a doc-file on the disk. It took an hour, using Word Writer ST (my only word processing program!) to edit the file. There were strange page breaks that would have wasted about 5 pages of paper. The page breaks did not coincide with the header/page numbers! There are an abundance of mis-spelled words. Someone failed to utilize their spelling checker. I find no excuse for this!

Desk accessories were a problem. There is no pull-down option or any instructions in the doc-file. Desk accessories take valuable memory; there is only about 16K free after the program is loaded! The capture buffer was useless; it lasted about a minute, before it was filled. On the other hand, Flash will allocate all* free memory for the capture buffer. This covers even marathon calling sessions. Future revisions of KIS will offer a bigger capture buffer. Let's wait and see!

The option menu is easy to use. I did get lost while setting the screen colors. The mouse button kept scrolling too fast. Default colors are usually good for me, although blue is my favorite color. The default modem and terminal settings were just fine. All the bbses on my list are 1200-baud local boards that use x-modem protocol. In addition, the citadels on my list allow users to store a configuration file at their end.

The time & date set feature is nice, but a clock cartridge is better. the ESTE clock by BigFoot systems works just fine with KISterm. Macro key setups are nice. If you use them, you can save a lot of time

and effort by just hitting a key for a word, command, etc. I had them on Flash, but never used them!

Flash offered "do-files" which will set up the password, etc and automatically log onto a bbs, download, whatever. Right now, KIS has no such features; macro keys make things easier. I am happy to say that future updates will address this issue. In the meantime, your directory allows you to store the password, user number, etc, and summon them by hitting "ALT-P" for password or "ALT-N" for user number.

It's easy to set up the dial directory, and dial. The modem configuration defaults to tone dialing. If you're like me, you'll need to change it for pulse dialing. The doc-file is hazy on that subject. A change to a tone dialing phone line would be nice, but that means paying Ma Bell a fee for flipping a switch, replacing a few phones, and an autodialer. Dialing is slightly awkward. First, you pull down the dialing menu, then click on a bbs name. Then you go up again, and click on "dial the number." Flash allows you to summon a dial directory of 50 numbers, double-click on a name, and automatically dial. KIS's dial directory is good for me, since I rarely call more than 10 bbses on any regular basis!

My Avatex 1200-baud modem has no speaker; this means it's necessary to watch the monitor to see when the modem reaches a bbs. It would be simpler if the author would include an audible tone signal on the monitor; he doesn't seem willing to comply. I suggest he reconsider, since I know many people who have my modem, and would experience the same disadvantage. I hate being forced to stare in anticipation at the screen; I have a tendency to day dream, watch the dog or the tv.

The arc utility works, although there are problems. You must know the names of files before you can extract them. You must list them first. I prefer ARCshell16.prg, which allows you to extract all the files without first listing

them. This brings about a contradiction in convenience now, versus progress tomorrow. ARC will be updated in the future; including ARC as part of the KISterm program complicates things. I'd prefer to have KISterm call ARC as a separate program. That way it would not take a future revision of KISterm to get a new revision of ARCshell. In addition, more memory could be made available for other uses, such as increased buffer size.

Conclusions:

It's inevitable that I compare KISterm to Flash, since they are the only term programs I've used with the ST. It's fair to say that Flash offers many more features at this time. However, KISterm is currently undergoing revisions which will allow it to rival Flash. KISterm will offer script files to match Flash's "do-files," and offer "chain dialing," which is one feature not offered by Flash. Chain dialing will call another BBS if the first one is busy.

On the subject of manuals, Flash has only a slight edge. The original manual left a lot to be desired; many instructions were vague or missing. Newer revisions were covered with a few doc-files, leaving a confusion of paper. The last revision included 20+ pages of doc-files as an addition to the original manual, only compounding the confusion. Antic promises a new manual after yet another version change, but it will certainly involve another charge. KISterm has only the doc-file, with all its faults. There will be a new doc-file with future revisions, but not* a manual. The excuse given is that the authors want to conserve costs, and keep prices down, and that a good program shouldn't need a manual! I tend to forget that the authors are just trying to get started in the business, and don't have the financial resources of the major software companies. So I guess I'll just bite the bullet, and concentrate on what I do like about the program.

Ease of use is a big issue for many of us. Flash can be used in many different levels of difficulty; many commands can be accessed by clicking the mouse.

There are many others that depend on the user remembering commands which don't always make sense. The sheer number of features can be quite intimidating, and many are un-needed or unwanted by the average user. KISterm offers most of the features we'd want, yet keeps things simple. You just point and click. But, then sometimes using the mouse can be quite awkward. I just noticed that when using Word Writer to edit this article. I'd prefer the option of using key-commands for some commands!

Let's compare some intangible factors. Flash is offered by Antic software, publishers of the magazines. They are accessible through Compuserve or Genie, or the US mail. KISterm is produced by Alphatech, a local company in Minneapolis. The authors are just a free phone call away, or they can be reached on local bulletin boards. You can even stop in at the store, see the latest software, and spend some more money. Indeed, Alphatech runs their own BBS: Spikemaster! I like the ability to easily communicate with the authors. I've had KIS for 5 days now, and have been in constant contact with both Tom Zemlin and Roger Hamilton, by way of MAST and STING bbses. They have been willing to answer my questions, and have thanked me for some suggestions I've made. That's the key of writing good software: an easy interchange between the author and the customer.

At this moment, I still reserve judgement on whether KISterm will replace Flash and my favorite term program. I'm very anxious to see future updates of KISterm, along with the new "manual." I'd also be interested to see if Flash would suddenly work if I converted my phone service to touch tone. That would mean I'd be able to explore the latest revisions. In the meantime, I'll use KISterm for awhile.

The nice thing about KISterm is that you don't need to use it long before you get to know it. Once you've fought past the set-ups & confusion, you're ready to roll. That's more than I can say for Flash!



MAST Meeting Minutes

by Dan Stubbs

The January meeting of MAST was opened by Jim Schulz and Phil Seifert. A survey was held of those members present to determine how members feel about many issues important to the club. Questions were asked about a variety of topics so that MAST's officers can better serve the club. A drawing was held for those who completed questionnaires; the prize, a 3.5 inch disk organizer was won by Dick Stubbs. Jim described the current DOMs which totaled 13 — 9 new DOMs and 4 updates. After the DOM description there was an update of the Bulletin Board System by Steve Pauley. It was announced that a second annual birthday party would be held in February honoring the second year of MAST. Come help us celebrate!

In the news and rumors department, it was reported that the laser printers from Atari are out in some locations and some of the internal parts to the laser printer were made by Canon. Microsoft Write was reported to be shipping and a new version of Wordperfect that fixes some problems with the original is out. It was reported that ANALOG magazine was bought out by another publishing house that said it would continue to publish the magazine. The introduction of the Supra 10 Megabyte floppy drive was reported to be delayed until sometime in February. Several new books on the Atari ST were recently released including: ST APPLICATIONS, COMPUTE'S AES GUIDE, and an INTRODUCTION TO GEM. Finally, Starglider is rumored to be coming out on disks that are compatible with both the Atari ST and the AMIGA.

In the demonstration department, Phil Seifert gave demonstrations of Beyond Zork and Dungeon Master, Steve Pauley demonstrated 'OIDS', and Dave Meile demonstrated Cyberpaint.



News from the Pres

By Jim Schulz

Yes, we've made through another year and February is here again. Yes, MAST has reached its second birthday. It's a long way from the ten people that showed up two years ago when Bob and I started MAST. I would just like to thank all who have contributed to MAST's growth over the past two years and wish for a great third year ahead. But enough on the nostalgia, it's party time. Yes, it's time for the second annual MAST birthday party. So let's see what we have in store for this year..... First, MAST DOMs. All MAST DOMs from #1 through last month's disks will be bargain-basement priced at \$3.00 each. You will never get a lower price. More on the DOM special in this month's DOM article. Second, the party. Current plans call for cake, pop, coffee, and snacks. If you would like to donate anything, please contact Phil or I. All donations will be greatly appreciated. Third, the raffle. Like last year, MAST will raffle off prizes donated by the local dealers. Raffle tickets will be distributed by giving each paid-up MAST member one ticket and one ticket for each MAST DOM bought at the February meeting. All tickets are eligible to win one of the many dealer donated prizes and one of the two grand prizes purchased by MAST. This year, MAST will purchase and raffle off Oids by FTL and Spectrum 512 from Antic. So buy DOMs and make sure you are a paid-up MAST member. Fourth, something new this year. MASTmania. This is my term for a rather strange little contest to celebrate MAST's birthday and to get you to check out the MAST BBS. For more info on MASTmania, check out the message base on the MAST BBS (560-9254). For this contest, only MAST members are eligible. And last but not least, the finale of the evening..... This will remain secret until the meeting. Let me just say that Phil has something super planned that has to be believed.

This is well worth showing up at the meeting. Before we leave the party, let me thank Phil for his help in getting this year's party organized. Come one, come all. Bring your friends and help MAST celebrate its second birthday!!!!

Now let's take a trip back and a trip forward. First, I would like to thank you all for your help in filling out the MAST survey at last month's meeting. The results are being reviewed by both Phil and I and the future direction of the club will be based on your comments. If you didn't fill out a survey at the last meeting, fill one out at this month's meeting. Surveys will be available up front. Make your voice known. Results of the survey will be published in two articles starting next month with the first on the MAST member demographics and second on comments on the club. Watch for these coming next month. Second, next month, MAST will hold its first swap meet. For those who don't know, a swap meet is a way to sell off your old, used software for cash or another program. All program must include the original disk and documentation. These have always been a great success for SPACE so let's clean out our closets and get rid of some of those old ST programs. More on the swap meet at the February meeting. Finally, back to the present, don't forget this month's MAST+ programmers meeting. The last two months have been some of our best meetings yet. Come and hear the latest from Chuck and Dale and our cast of programmers on the programming topics and ideas. Always good information for all!!!!

Disk sales..... The blank disk sales have been hot and heavy. After complaining to the disk company, I finally got my shipment of 150 double-sided disks last month and out they went. I believe that I have less than 20 left at this time for the next MAST meeting. We will, more than likely have single-sided disks as well as I again wait for more doubles. I currently have 2 shipments of 100 on order so

one of these days they will start arriving. As always, singles are \$1.00 each and doubles are \$1.10 subject to availability. Also if you want disk labels, I have a box full of extra disk labels from the disks of the month. Please feel free to take as many as you want. No need to buy disks to get these. All sorts of good stuff from MAST.

Newsletter.... According to Steve, we have a lot of good user-submitted articles this month. Thank you to all who contributed and keep the reviews and articles coming. I would much rather read someone else than my random ramblings each month. Again, thank you for your contributions.

BBS..... Oh, yes, the BBS just keeps rolling on and as busy as ever. Check out the MAST BBS this month for the latest news about ANALOG, OSS/ICD and the latest in ST Reports and ZMAGS. Also the latest rumors as well..... More good stuff is coming soon so stay tuned..... Also remember to check in for more information on MASTmania.....

Special offers time.... Yesterday, I received an offer from Quickview Systems about Zoomracks. Zoomracks III is coming soon for a new price of \$295. A little high.... But, if you buy now, you get a copy of Zoomracks II and a free upgrade to Zoomracks III for the low price of \$119.95, a savings of \$175. If you haven't seen Zoomracks II, it deserves another look. A lot has changed since the first version of Zoomracks and a lot is planned for Zoomracks III. Check out the original Hypercard. For more information about Zoomracks and purchase forms, talk to me at the meeting. Also, a full running demo of Zoomracks II will also be available as part of this month's DOMs. This is a great deal and for what is planned for Zoomracks III, it's even better yet. Check this one out.....

Miscellaneous stuff..... First, I would like to thank Paul Martz, our Northwest pilot, for his generous donation of one year's worth of ST magazines to the MAST

book library. Some are already checked out so check out these new additions next month. Second, speaking of the book library, once Neil gets the library inventoried, we will start filling in the ST magazine holes in the library and try to become a good source for information from START, ST World, ST Informer, ST Applications, ST-LOG, and ST Xpress. Third, this month we are sending out membership renewal applications to all of our old members and inviting them back to MAST for the birthday party. It has come to my attention that a number of members easily forget when their memberships are up. Currently the best way to check this out is to look at the back of your newsletter. The label says when your membership is up. In addition, Alan will start sending out postcards to remind members that it is time to renew. Remember, memberships help us to support you and help support MAST so please renew when your membership is up. Finally, let me thank all of you who did renew at the last MAST meeting. You kept Alan hopping to keep track of all of the renewals. If we missed you, stop by and talk to Alan at the next meeting and he will take care of you.

Well, it's a wrap for this month. Lots of good stuff for this month and more planned for the months ahead. But before we go, let's look in the envelope..... Oh, what this black thing here????? This month's non-recommended black program is Michtron's Juggler. This program is advertised as a switcher program, but the number of programs that it works with is quite limiting. This is a must try before you buy program. From the demo of the program which I saw, I decided against buying it at this time. You decide for yourself. Now how about some goodies.... First, how about Oids??? This new program from FTL is a combination lunar lander program/Choplifter program plus a whole lot more. This one definitely deserves a look. Second, how about Moebius and Ultima IV??? Both are per-

fect additions for all of us Dungeonmaster lovers. Finally, how about Universal File Selector??? Have you ever wished for a better file selector for all of your GEM programs??? Well, this is a file selector and a whole lot more including disk formatter, file copier, file renamer. This was demoed at the last MAST+ meeting and mine is currently on order. This one deserves a look by all ST owners. If Atari couldn't get it right, at least someone did.

So that's it for February. I hope to see you all at the MAST birthday party celebration and at the MAST+ meeting this month or as always on the MAST BBS. Happy computing and happy birthday MAST!!!!

Children Will Play by Phil Seifert

Things are slowing down a little now after the holiday season with new software and hardware coming out. Which is just fine since it is real difficult to keep up with everything happening. But, that does not mean there will not be some titles and equipment coming out soon or already out. For example, I have a hard confirmation that Gunship is to be shipped out on February 8th. This is one of the most eagerly awaited for software program from MicroProse. Gunship is the helicopter battle simulation that Super Huey never was. I can't wait to see it myself.

Atari has finally shipped their laser printers now. I have been playing around with it and it does look like it is pretty good. In order to use the laser printer to the fullest capacity, you will need to have at least 2 megabytes in your ST computer as the printer does not have any onboard RAM. If you don't have that much memory then you could only really effectively use it for a line printer. The extra memory is needed to set up a whole page of graphics and at 300 DPI that is a lot of memory. Publishing Partner version 1.03 is also available now and is a steal at \$89.95 retail. The program does come

with the laser printer driver already included which is a real boon. I like the results I can obtain with Publishing Partner and the Atari SLM804 Laser Printer. The Font Factory Clip Art works real well with this setup (not that it did not before with a dot matrix printer, just that a laser printer is, well, a laser printer). And I have talked with Soft Logik recently. They are planning to release both the ST and Amiga version of Publishing Partner Professional in the latter part of February. The enhancements of the program include object grouping, text wrap around graphics, one degree incremental rotation and much more. For just \$199.95, why would any want to use Page Maker unless they have a Mac or IBM? This program is sheer dynamite. And previous owners of the Publishing Partner will be able to upgrade for just \$50!!

I have now seen the new graphic editing to the Hybrid Art's Smpte Trak program and all I can say is I am impressed. Very impressed. This makes this music sequencer very easy to handle editing with now since you can see how things are going visually and edit events visually. I thought Master Tracks Pro was pretty good and was thinking about switching to that program for sequencing but I have now changed my mind. Of course, there is another reason I have changed my mind too, to be honest. I picked up the new scoring program from Hybrid Arts called EZ Score Plus. This is a nice, easy to use, good scoring program. The music notation printout with this is good. I think Dr. T's Copyist does a better job, but it goes over things three times instead of the once or twice EZ Score does. My only real gripe with EZ Score is that it only supports Epson style 9 pin graphics. They really should support 24 pinners and I would just love it if they supported the Atari Laser Printer too. EZ Score, as is the case with all music scoring programs, only works with the sequences created by Hybrid Arts' programs. There is a proposal for a common

sequence file structure on the boards right now, but not too many companies are using it yet. It would be nice if I could use Copyist to score Smpte Trak. Before I forget, I should mention that EZ Score Plus is currently priced special for introduction at \$99.95 retail and scheduled to go to \$149.95. It will score sequences created by EZ Score, Midi Trak, and Smpte Trak, all from Hybrid Arts. Before you all go think this is all Hybrid Arts is doing for a while, think again. They are going to be coming out with a switcher program for the ST that is supposed to allow you to load several programs into memory and switch between them. I hope they do a good job of it. I have seen the Juggler from Michtron and have some serious reservations about that one. Jim probably will say a few things about that one. One of the biggest problems with switchers is going to be compatibility with existing programs and I sincerely hope Hybrid Arts, Michtron and whoever else is designing a switching program carefully look at the most popular programs to see if they work with their systems, i.e. Degas Elite, Word Writer, etc.

The program I have used most in the last month has been PC Ditto. If you have any need to run IBM programs on your ST, get this one!! It works very well. Since I have had to some dBase III programming and did not have an IBM PC, I was left with little choice on how to do this. PC Ditto works best with word processors and databases. I would certainly not use this one for number crunching or cad work, it is just too slow. Otherwise this thing is good and should become a staple for everyone's 1 meg ST. There is now full hard drive support, monochrome monitor support, and it does work on the Mega ST (though you do not end up with a 3 meg PC, heh. Just 703K.) Now if there was only a way to switch between the ST, Magic Sac, and PC Ditto, we could really impress some people with this machine as much as it has already impressed us.

Speaking of the Magic Sac, it is just

getting better and better. An ST with the Sac will never totally replace the Macintosh computer, but it sure can help you do some of your Mac work at home. And with the Translator One coming out, you would be able to read and write HFS double sided disks from the Mac without any problems. Reading Mac formatted disks is kinda slow though, but there are some good legitimate reasons for that. I would never recommend the ST and the Magic Sac to replace the Mac, but if you already have an ST, monochrome monitor, it just makes your machine more fun and maybe more productive. The complete Magic Sac system is \$450 and you still have to supply the Macintosh ROMS which are not that hard to get right now. Could be more difficult to acquire in the future though. I like it so that I can learn more how the Mac works and even appreciate more how well the ST works.

I guess that is all I have to say for this month's column except that I want to see everyone there at the MAST Second Birthday Party. Everyone is invited, including SPACE members and even nonmembers. Come and have a good time!!



MAST Birthday Party

Hey! Hey! Hey!

Guess what is coming up at the next MAST meeting? Yep, it is the second MAST Birthday Party. And to show all our supporters and members how much we appreciate them, we are going to have some fun. There will be refreshments, door prizes, and even some special events. I won't tell you what the special events are yet, but, I think you all would find it very interesting. Anyone who is a MAST member, SPACE member, former member, or even someone who is thinking about joining the group is welcome to come and help us celebrate our second year as a club. Come and have a good time!!



MAST Disks Of the Month

By Jim Schulz

Yes, it's another busy month, so let's get going and check out last month's selection of disks.

- #78 - Uniterm 2.0a 006 (Latest version of Uniterm with dialup menu)
- #196 - MicroEmacs 3.9e #1 (Emacs editor, command files and docs)
- #197 - MicroEmacs 3.9e #2 (Emacs command files, tutorial and source)
- #198 - MicroEmacs 3.9e #3 (Emacs source code files)
- #209 - January DOM #1 (Utilities)
- #210 - January DOM #2 (Applications)
- #211 - January DOM #3 (Games)
- #212 - January DOM #4 (Demos and GFA programs and files)
- #213 - January DOM #5 (OSS Pascal and C files, music and communication)
- #214 - Demo Disk #27 (Working demo version of ST-Talk Professional)
- #215 - MicroSpell 1.0 (Spell checker program w/ 40,000 word dictionary)
- #216 - Spectrum Movie (Animated demo of four TV screens)
- #217 - Dlibs 1.0 (C library with C source code)

Well, that's a look at last month, let's look at some miscellaneous news first and then into this month.

Party time..... Yes, this month, MAST will be selling off all old pre-February 1988 DOM for just \$3.00 each. This is an excellent way to fill out your collection of MAST DOMs. Also for each disk purchased, you will receive a raffle ticket for the prizes at this month's birthday party. If we don't have the disks that you want in stock, we will mail them to you in a week if you we are sending five or less. For more than five disks, contact me and we will make arrangements or you can pick them up at the next MAST meeting. Also because of the availability of the DOC disk at the meeting, this price will extend for one week following the meeting. Mail me a check with your selections and I'll

get the disks back to you. This is the lowest price you will receive this year and maybe ever on old MAST DOMs. Old DOM prices are going up next month so this is your last chance.

Old disk availability.... As the library increases, it gets harder and harder to keep the old disks in stock and to haul them to each meeting. So starting with the March meeting, only DOMs from the past six months will be available at the meeting. Older disks will still be available, but only by ordering them in advance and they will be mailed after the meeting. Currently, we have over 300 disks tied up in old inventory so this should help get these old disks recycled and keep the old inventory down. Also selected special disks from the past will remain in stock like Uniterm and ST Writer. Finally, the prices of all old disks will return to \$6.00 starting next month. Members were taking advantage of a good deal and not buying the DOMs until three months has elapsed to get the cheaper price. I believe the goal should be to get all disks down to \$5.00 in general. This is more possible without the two tier pricing.

Prices.... For this month only, all February DOMs are \$6.00 each with all other disks selling for the low price of \$3.00 each. In addition, the MAST news disk and doc disk are \$2.00. Updates on old disks are \$2.00 with the return of the original disk.

Doc disks.... Yes, I know.... I blew it again last month. Well, this is my project for the next week. I will hopefully have the new doc disk done along with the disk checksum program by the time you read this in the newsletter. If you can't wait for the meeting, I will upload both of these files arced to the MAST BBS for your downloading pleasure. These will also be available for \$2.00 at the next MAST meeting. Since this is quite necessary for checking out old disks, an extension of the \$3.00 old disk price has been given. Also if you can't make the meeting and

want the new doc disk, drop me a line with \$2.00 and I will get it right out to you. I hope this accommodates everyone's needs.

Well, that's the news and on to this month's selection of the best in public domain software....

ANALOG - You asked me about it last month so I will deliver it this month. At least two disks of programs from ANALOG and ST-LOG with more to come....

DJEmacs and DLibs - Well, one more time. I have an official update disk from Dale Schumacher of both the source and program for DJEmacs and DLibs 1.1. DLibs 1.1 will be a free update this month. Since this new update has not yet been distributed, currently this is only way to get the latest version. Thanks Dale for your help. Also the source and program to one of the best Emacs editors around by Dale and John Stanley. All sorts of good stuff this month.

Cyperpaint Demo - Last month, on the night before the meeting, I booted my copy only to see it trap out half way through the demo. Well, I now have a good copy so this month we will have probably the best demo to date for the ST. It's one movie/demo that you must see and have to believe. This one is available as one double-sided disk for \$6.00 or two single-sided disks for \$8.00. This is a must have!!!!

Uniterm 2.0a - Yes, it finally arrived and it's as good as ever. The only thing missing last month was the docs. The docs aren't here yet, but they should make it by the meeting along with a brand new version with more bug fixes, new script commands, and the beginning of VT300 emulation. So bring your old disk and get a \$2.00 update.

AIM - Yes, the Atari Image Manager program is back and better than ever. New features include 4 windows and importing of DEGAS and Neo pictures. If you haven't seen the AIM program before, you have missed something good. If you own the old disks, bring them in for a

\$2.00 update.

Zoomracks II - This is a full working demo of the latest version of Zoomracks. This version will allow you to store up to 25 records in a file and allow you to read in and manipulate ASCII stored data bases. If you have ever wondered what Zoomracks was like, now you have your chance. Sample racks and help files are included. Check it out and then take advantage of the good bargain on Zoomracks this month!!!!

Squixx - Well, the Germans have done it again!!! How about a version of QIX for your monochrome monitor???? Sounds good to me!!! Check it out this month. I haven't seen it, but if it's like some of the other mono games from Germany, it will be a must have.

Treasure - Speaking of games, how about a public domain version of the game Loderunner with a screen editor and more??? Well, that is what this is. From the description, I had to download it and it is very well done. It also includes GFA source code as well and 8 screens to get you started. This is one game that I will look at!!!!

Freebase - How about a data base with sorting on selectable fields, importing and exporting of data, text merge, and a report writer all of a public domain program???? Well, that's what we have this month. Yes, another great free data base program.

Desk Accessories - This month we have two very needed desk accessories for those modem programs and other GEM applications. First, we have an ARC desk accessory with list, extract, and view. Second, we have a new version of the DCFORMAT program for formatting disks with all the features of the big program with no disk copying. Well, it looks like two more slots are taken.

Well, that's a sample of what we have for this month with more coming every day. Check out the MAST BBS the week of the meeting of the latest update on this month's DOMs. As always, I do my best

to put out as much good stuff as possible given the time that I have available. But as always, expect the best from the MAST DOM.

If you can't make the meeting and would still like to get ahold of the DOM or would like to get ahold of the DOC disk, my address is 3264 Welcome Avenue North, Crystal, MN 55422

That's it for February. Another great month of DOMs is on the way with more good one planned for the months ahead. I hope to see you all at this month's MAST birthday party and on the MAST BBS.



Notes From the Editor

WOW!! look at all these articles that people have written. Thanks to everyone who wrote stuff for the newsletter. Now lets hear from some of the rest of you next month.



RIBBON RE-INKING

Jim Scheib - 721-4185

The club can re-ink most printer ribbons (black) for a small fee. There is no longer a reason to use a faded ribbon! Ribbons that can be re-inked are: \$1.00/ribbon - Spool to spool (all types) - Epson MX-80 and compatibles - Epson LX-80 and compatibles - C. Itoh Prowriter and compatibles (NEC 8023A/C) - Citizen 120 D - Panasonic - small ones that turn counter-clockwise: \$2.00/ribbon - Epson MX-100 and compatibles. Other ribbons can be attempted, too. But if you prefer, you can buy an adapter (\$8.50 + \$3.50 shipping and handling) for the club and receive half that amount in credit towards re-inkings. See Jim Scheib at the SPACE meeting, or Jim Schulz at the MAST meeting. Please pay in advance and be sure to have your ribbon(s) in a plastic bag.



Magazine Update

By Jim Schulz

Every month, I get the same questions. Have you got your Analog??? Have you got your Atari Explorer??? Have you got your ST Applications???? I got these questions as Vice President of SPACE and I am still getting them as President of MAST. For some reason, Atari magazines just don't want to come out on time. Why, I don't know????? Solutions??? Well, this is my solution to this problem. Each

month, right here, I will list each of the magazines that I get and the date that I received it and the issue number and date. This should answer the question of what is out when and what is out for Atari magazines as well. This will start next month as I have to start keeping track. If you want to help, drop me mail on the MAST and SPACE BBSes when you get your Atari magazines and we will compare notes. If nothing else, the magazines won't be able slip without complaints. Starting next month.....

Desktop Publishing Demonstration

Saturday, February 20th, 1:00 PM

Featuring:

Atari Mega ST
Atari Laser Printer
Publishing Partner



WIZARD'S WORK
Four Seasons Mall
Plymouth, MN
(612) 559-4690



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S.P.A.C.E./M.A.S.T

P.O. BOX 12016

New Brighton, MN 55112